News Release
October 19, 2026
Contact: Magen Eissenstat, 202/609-9889

New York City's Times Square, Boston's South Station Among Landmarks That Will Be Lit for *Lights On Afterschool* This Week

This month, as more than a million people rally for afterschool programs at some 8,000 *Lights On Afterschool* events, cities and towns will illuminate landmarks to show their support. The Afterschool Alliance organizes *Lights On Afterschool*, the only national rally for afterschool programs, to spotlight the need for vastly greater investments in afterschool programs, which keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, provide alternatives to screen time, and give working parents peace of mind that their kids are safe, supervised and learning after the school day ends. It is now in its 27th year. Superstar and 8-time Grammy Award winner USHER is honorary chair of *Lights On Afterschool* again this year.

Lights On Afterschool events are being held this month in every state at schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, Ys, 4-Hs, parks, community centers, museums, and other venues. Landmarks will shine for afterschool on or around this Thursday, October 22, the official *Lights On Afterschool* day. Among them:

- **Alabama:** Retirement Systems of Alabama buildings in Montgomery and Mobile
- **Alaska:** University of Alaska Museum of the North in Fairbanks
- **Delaware:** State Capitol Cupola in Dover
- **Illinois**: 6 Chicago skyline buildings, including: Blue Cross Blue Shield Tower; 875 N. Michigan Avenue; 540 W. Madison; One Prudential Plaza; Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower); and 1 N. Dearborn
- **Massachusetts:** Boston South Station
- **Michigan:** Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Building in Flint
- **Mississippi: "**The Rock," University of Southern Mississippi's Renasant stadium in Hattiesburg
- **New Jersey:** 4 Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission bridges: Lower Trenton; New Hope-Lambertville; Uhlerstown-Frenchtown; and Northampton Street
- **New York:** Two jumbo billboards in New York City's Times Square
- **Oklahoma:** Scissortail Park in Oklahoma City
- **Washington, D.C.:** One Franklin Square, the tallest commercial building in the city

Clear Channel Outdoor is supporting *Lights On Afterschool* by donating some of its most prominent spaces to display afterschool messages on digital billboards, bus shelters, and poster spaces in 25

markets around the country throughout the month. This Thursday, October 22, Clear Channel will feature afterschool messages on two jumbo billboards in New York City's Times Square and will illuminate Boston's South Station. The billboards feature artwork created by an afterschool student. Evelyn Daniel, a 15-year-old 10th-grader at Cass Technical High School in Detroit, worked on the billboard as part of Usher's New Look programming at the Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club Spark Lab, which gives youth high-production, real-world work experience with industry experts. Communications and design professionals provided guidance and support, and Clear Channel shared feedback and considerations for the billboard format.

According to a 2025 study, the parents of 29.6 million U.S. children want afterschool programs for their kids, but less than 7 million students are currently enrolled. That means three in four kids whose parents want afterschool programs for them (77%) are being left behind. Cost and accessibility are the barriers most families cannot overcome. More than nine in ten parents of afterschool students (92%) report their child's program offers STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) learning – a significant increase from a decade ago. Ninety-five percent of parents with children in afterschool programs are satisfied with the program their child attends; and 89% favor public funding for these programs.

# # # #

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.